

16. (Amended) The sheet pack of claim 15, wherein said keratotic plug remover has a solvent content of from 1 to 80%.

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17. (Amended) The sheet pack of claim 14, wherein said keratotic plug remover has a water content of from 0.1 to 30%.

18. (Amended) The sheet pack of claim 14, wherein said keratotic plug remover has a water content of from 15 to 20%.

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20. (Amended) A process for removing keratotic plugs, which comprises

(i) plastering skin with a sheet pack comprising a cosmetic composition comprising the keratotic plug remover of claim 1 and a water vapor-permeable support; and

(ii) drying the pack; and

(iii) peeling said pack from said skin.

21. (Amended) The process of claim 20, wherein said keratotic plug remover has no flowability further comprising wetting said skin or said sheet pack prior to plastering said skin.

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23. (Amended) The process of claim 21, further comprising wetting said sheet pack prior to plastering said skin.--

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENT

Support for the amendments to the claims is found in the claims as originally filed.

The amendments do not further limit the claims as they merely replace the term "sheet-like"

with the term "sheet", an amendment which is not narrowing. No new matter has been added by these amendments.

Claims 1-23 remain active in this application.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

The present invention relates to a keratotic plug remover, a sheet pack comprising the same and a method for removing keratotic plugs using the keratotic plug remover or sheet pack. The keratotic plug remover of the present invention comprises a polymer (A) having sulfonic or sulfate groups or salts thereof, and a nonionic polymer (B), wherein both polymers are soluble in water and present in a mixing ratio of (A):(B) of from 30:70 to 70:30. Applicants have found that by using the specified combination of polymers in the specified ratios, one can obtain superior plug removal that is relatively insensitive to the humidity level of the environment during use.

Claims 1-13 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Uemura et al. Uemura et al neither anticipates nor makes obvious the sheet pack as claimed comprising a blend of polymers (A) and (B) in a ratio of 30:70 to 70:30. Uemura et al disclose a polymer keratotic plug remover composition and sheet pack comprising a polymer composition. However, Uemura et al do not recite the particular combination of polymers of the present invention, wherein the composition is a polymer mixture of a sulfonic or sulfate group containing polymer with a nonionic polymer, nor the specific ratio of mixing for the two polymers. The disclosure of Uemura et al contains a large list of polymers beginning at about column 2, line 4. However, there is no description of a combination of a polymer having sulfonic or sulfate groups or salts thereof, with a nonionic polymer, where the polymers are

combined in the claimed ratios. The closest example of Uemura appears to be composition 9 of Table 6 which shows a product made from a mixture of poly 2-acrylamide-2-methylpropane sulfonate (AMPS) and polyvinyl alcohol in a ratio of 20:5, respectively. This translates to a mixing ratio of 80:20, clearly outside the range of the present invention. Accordingly, the Uemura et al reference does not anticipate the present claims and the rejection should be withdrawn.

Various claims stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over Uemura et al, either alone or in combination with Ishida et al. These references do not render the present invention obvious, as neither provides any teaching or suggestion to combine the claimed polymers in the claimed mixing ratio, nor any suggestion of the advantages of doing so. Uemura et al has been discussed above. Ishida et al does not overcome the deficiencies of Uemura. In particular the Examiner has used Ishida in order to show a sheet pack construction. However, as noted above, Uemura also discloses sheet packs using polymers. Ishida makes no suggestion regarding the particular mixture of polymers nor to the improvement in keratotic plug removal with increased humidity that results in the present invention.

At page 14 of the present specification, Applicants have provided data which show that the present composition and sheet pack provides keratotic plug removal at both moderate and high humidity that is significantly improved compared to the use of a single polymer or combinations of PQDM/PVP or PQDM/PVA. Applicants have shown in the data of the present specification, that even when the ratio of polymers falls within the proper range, when the polymers are not as specified in the present claims, the plug removal is significantly deteriorated at higher humidities (see Comparative Examples 3 and 6 vs. Exs. 1-5, 11 and 12). Further, when the individual sulfonic or sulfate group containing polymers or nonionic

polymers are used alone, a deterioration of plug removal is found at higher humidity.

However, when the polymers are selected as claimed and the mixing ratio is as claimed, one observes improved plug removal over a range of humidity levels. This is nowhere taught by the cited art.

Accordingly, the combination of Uemura and Ishida do not render the present claims obvious. Even if the Examiner maintains otherwise, the data in the specification is sufficient to establish that the claimed invention would not have been obvious. The rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 14-18 and 20-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph for use of the term "sheet-like". This rejection has been obviated by replacement of the term with the word "sheet", which is not a narrowing of the scope of the claims.

The Examiner indicates in the Official Action that the Information Disclosure Statement filed March 14, 2002 has not been considered. However, the Examiner has given no reasons for not considering the IDS. The IDS was filed along with copies of 123 references. To the best of Applicants' representative's knowledge, the copies of the references were all legible. Certainly, the references were not all illegible. The Examiner is requested to consider those references for which legible copies are present and to contact Applicants' representative to provide legible copies of any references the Examiner thinks are illegible. The IDS was believed to have been properly filed and should be considered in course.

Applicants submit this application is now in condition for allowance and early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



J. Derek Mason, Ph.D.
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 35,270



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Telephone: (703) 413-3000
Facsimile: (703) 413-2220
JDM